



OCTOBER 2026 GENERAL CONFERENCE · SATURDAY MORNING SESSION

The Sculpting of Our Souls

Sister Tamara W. Runia · First Counselor in the Young Women General Presidency

Words to remember

- *“Let’s choose Christ, who can heal the wounds of this world while carving out room for joy!”*
- *“God is shaping us into something only He knows we can become.”*

In Sister Tamara W. Runia’s own words, from the talk.

Sister Tamara W. Runia loves to fix things. If a shoelace has a knot, she untangles it. If a shirt has a stain, she gets it out. Some people call her “the stain whisperer”!

But one day something happened that she could not fix. Her grown-up son, Ryan, kissed his wife and four little children goodbye and went to work. A few hours later, his heart stopped, and he died. The next day was his little girl Piper’s second birthday. When the family sang “Happy Birthday,” Piper looked around for her daddy. Sister Runia knew this was something she could not fix.

Sister Runia shared a scripture that helps her. When the Prophet Joseph Smith was in a cold jail, he asked God for help. The Lord told him, “All these things shall give thee experience, and shall be for thy good.” That means hard things can help us learn and grow.

When Sister Runia was little, she thought keeping the commandments was like holding a big umbrella. She thought the umbrella would keep all the rain away. But she learned that everyone gets rained on. Hard things happen to everyone. She said, “The gospel isn’t the umbrella; it’s the solid rock we’re standing on during the storm—that ‘sure foundation ... whereon if men build they cannot fall.’” Jesus is our strong rock.

At Ryan’s funeral, Sister Runia said she did not understand why it happened. But she said, “Not understanding is not the same as not believing.” She still believes God sees us and loves us.

Ryan's son Jack was seven. He gave a Primary talk about Lego bricks. He said that when he gets a new box, he lays out the pieces and follows the instructions, just like Heavenly Father has a plan for us. His mom asked, what if there was no picture on the box, only the instructions? Jack said he would still follow them, "Yes, because you can trust the one who designed it, and it always turns out."

The day before he died, Ryan helped a sad neighbor. He told him he could blame God, or he could turn to God and let Him heal him. We can choose Jesus too.

Last, Sister Runia told about her brother Kent. In an art class, he had to make a clay statue of his own head. He could not make the eyes look right. He did not want help at first. Finally he asked his teacher. The teacher dug deep into the clay, and soon the eyes looked real! Jesus is like that teacher. When we ask Him for help, He shapes us. Sister Runia said, "God is shaping us into something only He knows we can become." One day we will thank Him for all of it.

A scripture for this talk: Helaman 5:12. Jesus is the strong rock we can stand on when hard things happen.

Let's talk about it

What did this talk teach us about the Savior? What is one small thing our family can do this week?

Kid-friendly summary in our own words · Read or watch the full talk: [churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2026/10/13runia](https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2026/10/13runia)